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Lateral flow antigen test FAQs

Initial roll out 34 trusts

Version 1, 11 November 2020

Frequently asked questions

These are the specific FAQs related to the lateral flow antigen tests. For all questions on HR processes following a positive test and related isolation questions, please refer to NHS Employers' FAQs on asymptomatic staff testing:

<https://www.nhsemployers.org/covid19/health-safety-and-wellbeing/asymptomatic-testing>

Q. What type of test are we rolling out?

The Innova SARS-CoV-2 Antigen Rapid Qualitative Test uses a swab which has been in contact with the nostril of the person being tested. The swab is inserted into the extraction tube with the extraction fluid and then rotated and pressed to make sure that the sample from the swab is released into the extraction fluid (swab is then discarded at this point).

You then take the extraction tube with the nozzle cap and place 2 drops of extraction fluid into the sample well of the LFD testing device cartridge and wait for the results on the test device.

Q. Is the test mandatory or voluntary?

Tests are voluntary, but staff should be encouraged to be involved in the testing to benefit their colleagues and patients.

Q. How frequently should staff be tested?

Staff should test themselves twice weekly every three to four days to fit with shift patterns and leave requirements; for example, Wednesday and Sunday, or Monday and Thursday.

Q. What happens if staff get a positive result?

Staff should inform their manager of a positive result trust in the normal way. A confirmatory PCR test will be arranged. They and their household should isolate as set out in government guidance:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>

Q. What happens if my test is negative, but I have coronavirus symptoms?

If you have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms please refer to NHS guidance online: [nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-COVID-19](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-COVID-19).

Q. Are we asking potentially positive staff to come to hospitals for a confirmatory PCR test?

Trusts should use their normal processes to access tests for staff members who have symptoms of COVID-19, whether that be through pillar 1 or 2. These processes assume that staff may be infected with COVID-19 and therefore suitable IPC and PPE will be in place. Staff should continue to isolate until they have the results of the PCR test.

Q. What should staff do with the used tests?

Staff can safely dispose of the test items in their normal household waste but should pour any residual buffer solution away first.

Q. At what stage is Test and Trace informed of the result?

At the point the confirmatory PCR test result is known, and this is positive result, test results will, as normal, be referred to Test and Trace.

Q. If a staff member has a positive PCR COVID-19 test, when should they start the lateral flow antigen tests again?

A staff member who tested positive would recommence home testing 90 days after their positive test was taken. The staff member will need to liaise with their NHS organisations to track the date at which the retesting should start.

Q. If staff are already regularly being tested through existing regimes – eg professionals visiting care homes, SIREN testing, PCR testing in Tier 3 areas, etc – should this be replaced by lateral flow tests?

If staff are already enrolled in another testing regime, this should not be replaced by the lateral flow tests.

If they are participating in research studies where the frequency of testing is not weekly (eg monthly) they should undertake twice-weekly LFD self-testing. For example, staff members participating in the SIREN study and having qRT PCR

testing every two weeks should also be part of the twice-weekly LFD testing if they are a patient-facing member of staff.

Q. What about LAMP testing – I thought this was being used for asymptomatic staff testing?

We are building LAMP testing capacity in pathology hubs across the country. As this becomes available it will be used for staff testing.

Q. What is being sent to trusts?

In the first instance, 1,250 boxes of 25 tests each will be delivered, with further deliveries to be arranged. Trusts will receive sufficient lateral flow tests to provide one box of 25 tests to each patient-facing member of staff as soon as possible.

Q. How many tests will staff get?

The testing kits will arrive in boxes containing the following:

- 25 foil pouches containing the test cartridge and a desiccant
- two vials of 6 mls buffer solution
- 25 Extraction tubes and 25 tube caps
- 25 sterilised swabs for sample collection
- Instructions for use of the device (IFU)

Q. How do we collect the results of these tests?

Initially the collection of results will be manual with staff recording their results on paper and handing to their organisation. A digital solution is being developed.

Q. How should organisations collate these results?

Results should be collated by organisations using the reporting template and uploaded to PHE's POCT portal.

Q. Can these tests be used for patients?

PCR tests should continue to be used for patients.

Q. Is there any prioritisation of which staff this should be rolled out to first?

Sufficient volumes of the lateral flow devices will be sent to organisations to enable all staff to be given the test asap.

Q. Can staff use the tests for their symptomatic family members?

Staff and family members who have symptoms should access tests in the normal way.

Q. Who are the trusts involved in the first stage?

Region Name	Trust Name
North West	Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust Warrington and Halton Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust
North East and Yorkshire	The Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust Gateshead Health NHS Foundation Trust Humber Teaching NHS Foundation Trust
Midlands	University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust Birmingham & Solihull Mental Health NHS FT University Hospitals of Derby and Burton NHS Foundation Trust University Hospitals of North Midlands NHS Trust
East of England	James Paget University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust Mid and South Essex NHS Foundation Trust

	Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
London	<p>Barking, Havering and Redbridge University Hospitals NHS Trust</p> <p>The Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital NHS Trust</p> <p>Barnet, Enfield and Haringey Mental Health NHS Trust</p> <p>Kingston Hospital NHS Foundation Trust</p> <p>Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust</p> <p>Epsom and St Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust</p> <p>Chelsea and Westminster Hospital NHS Foundation Trust</p> <p>The Hillingdon Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust</p> <p>Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust</p> <p>London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust</p>
South East	<p>Royal Surrey County Hospital NHS Foundation Trust</p> <p>Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust</p> <p>Buckingham Healthcare NHS Trust</p> <p>University Hospital Southampton NHS Foundation Trust</p> <p>Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust</p> <p>Medway NHS Foundation Trust</p> <p>University Hospitals Plymouth NHS Trust</p> <p>Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust</p> <p>Somerset NHS Foundation Trust</p>

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